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Virat Kohli during a practice session in Colombo on Friday | AFP

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INDIA-PAK GETS RESERVE STRENGTH AS PLAYING CONDITIONS CHANGE

Asian Cricket Council, via PCB, provides extra day to ensure arch rivals' Super 4 game is completed though it is continuing to pour in Colombo

PLAYING CONDITIONS CHANGED MIDWAY

As per the original schedule agreed by all teams, only the final, scheduled to be held in Colombo on September 17, was to have a reserve day. But with rain threatening to play spoilsport, the organisers decide to have an extra day for the clash in case there's rain on Sunday. No other Super Four game will have a reserve day and therein lies the problem

ROHIT & CO MAY END UP PLAYING ON 3 DAYS

- If the India-Pak game spills over to Monday, the Men in Blue may end up playing on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday as their next Super Four game against Sri Lanka is slated for Tuesday
- Both Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have said that they weren't consulted in the decision-making process | P17

90%
CHANCE OF PRECIPITATION DURING SUNDAY'S GAME

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Hold wide-ranging talks, re-emphasise shared values of freedom, democracy, human rights, inclusion and pluralism

Quad, def ties figure in Modi, Biden talks

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Friday held wide-ranging talks with US President Joe Biden, adding the friendship between the two nations will continue to play a great role in furthering global good.

"Happy to have welcomed Joe Biden at Lok Kalyan Marg. Our meeting was very productive. We were able to discuss numerous topics which will further economic and people to people linkages between India and the US. The friendship between our nations will continue to play a great role in furthering global good," said the prime minister.

OPEN, FREE INDO-PACIFIC

"Prime Minister Modi and President Biden reaffirmed the importance of the Quad in supporting a free, open, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific," the joint statement said

"PM Modi and President Biden expressed their appreciation for the substantial progress underway to implement the ground breaking achievements of PM Modi's visit to the US in June. The leaders called their governments to continue the work of transforming the India-US Strategic Partnership across all dimensions of our multifaceted global agenda, based on trust and mutual understanding," according to a joint statement from the White House.

The leaders re-emphasised that the shared values of freedom, democracy, human rights, inclusion, pluralism and equal opportunities for all citizens are critical to the success their countries enjoy and these were the values that strengthened their relationship.

Biden reaffirmed his support for a reformed UNSC with India as a permanent member, and in this context welcomed India's candidature for the UNSC non-permanent seat in 2028-29.

The two leaders also reaffirmed their collaboration in defence ties, critical and emerging technologies, semiconductor supply chains, telecommunications, quantum computing, cyber security, education, health and energy amongst other things.

Earlier in the day, Modi had separate bilateral meetings with Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Mauritius counterpart Pravind Jugnauth. The first bilateral was with Jugnauth. India and Mauritius are celebrating 75 years of diplomatic ties. "We discussed cooperation in sectors like infrastructure, fintech, culture and more. We also reiterated India's commitment to furthering the voice of the Global South," said Modi.

As for his talks with Hasina, the PM said, "Our talks covered areas like connectivity, commercial linkages and more."

Sources said the Bangladesh PM is likely to inaugurate a rail link with Tripura and the second unit of the Rampal power plant along with Modi, virtually from Delhi, on the sidelines of the G20 meetings. P11

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with US President Joe Biden at the host's Lok Kalyan Marg residence for a bilateral meeting in New Delhi on Friday | PTI

Delhi leaders declaration to have voice of Global South

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

THE draft of the New Delhi Leaders Declaration is almost ready and will be recommended to the leaders, said India's G20 Sherpa, Amitabh Kant.

"Only after the New Delhi leaders' declaration is formally accepted, we will be able to talk about the actual achievements of the declaration," Kant said a day ahead of the G20 Summit.

The declaration will have the voice of the Global South and developing countries. "No other document in the world would have such a strong voice for the Global South and developing countries," Kant said adding that the challenges the world faced post the last G20 were massive.

When India took over the G20 Presidency in Bali last year, it was in the midst of a slowing global growth and productivity. The pandemic followed by the conflict in Ukraine had a telling effect on most economies of the world, squeezing them and impacting food security. The prime minister was particular that India's Presidency must be inclusive, decisive, ambitious and action oriented, Kant said.

While there will be lots of deliberations on various issues, the focal point is expected to be Ukraine. Charles Michel, President of the European Council, blamed Russia for the conflict in Ukraine. There are three global challenges taking centre stage. The first is the war in Ukraine, the second is fighting climate change and third is fair financing. Multilateralism and solidarity is the only way forward, he said.

daCunha/AB/895

POLL-ITICAL FUTURE

BSY confirms BJP-JDS pact for LS elections

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

THE BJP and JDS seem to have already forged an alliance with former prime minister and JDS supremo HD Deve Gowda holding crucial talks with Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president JP Nadda in New Delhi recently, even as he spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi over phone during the meeting.

Although neither Gowda nor former chief minister HD Kumaraswamy officially confirmed forging the alliance, JDS sources privy to the details of the meeting and BJP leaders, including former CMs BS Yediyurappa and Basavaraj Bommai, confirmed it.

According to sources, Gowda held talks with Shah and Nadda in New Delhi on September 5, after which he convened a meeting of JDS leaders at Kumaraswamy's residence at JP Nagar in Bengaluru the next day. At the meeting in Bengaluru, JDS leaders gave their consent to formally forge an alliance with the BJP. The BJP-JDS alliance is aimed at thwarting the efforts of the ruling Congress in Karnataka from winning more Lok Sabha seats as the latter is looking at bagging at least 20 of the 28 seats in the 2024 general elections, riding on the recent formation of the I.N.D.I.A bloc of 28 parties.

The JDS, according to sources, expects five LS seats, including Hassan, Mandya, Kolar, Chikkaballapura and Bengaluru Rural, but would settle for four. The chances of BJP leader CP Yogeshwar contesting on a JDS ticket against the incumbent Congress MP DK Suresh, younger brother of Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC president DK Shivakumar, cannot be ruled out, a source said. P4

BYPOLLS

BJP wins 3 Assembly seats, Oppn parties bag 4

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THE opposition alliance INDIA bloc on Friday received a shot in the arm as it bagged four assembly seats in bypolls to seven seats across six states.

The BJP secured three seats while the Congress, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Trinamool Congress, and the Samajwadi Party won one seat each.

In Ghosi, the SP's Sudhakar Singh defeated BJP candidate Dara Singh Chauhan by 42,759 votes. Interestingly, the bypoll was necessitated after Chauhan, who had won the Ghosi seat in 2022 on an SP ticket, resigned after he joined the BJP.

The BJP won two seats in Tripura, where its candidates Taffajal Hossain defeated CPI(M)'s Mizan Hossain by 30,237 votes in Boxanagar and Bindu Debnath drubbed CPI(M)'s Kaushik Chanda by 18,871 votes in Dhanpur.

In Jharkhand's Dumri, the JMM's Bebi Devi won by 17,000 votes, defeating AJSU's Yashoda Devi.

In Uttarakhand, BJP candidate Parvati Das won the Bageshwar seat by 2,406 votes.

In West Bengal, the saffron party suffered a jolt as it failed to retain the Dhupguri constituency, where the TMC's Nirmal Chandra Roy defeated the BJP's Tapasi Roy by 4,309 votes.

In Kerala, the Congress retained the Puthuppally seat with its candidate Chandy Oommen, the son of late Congress stalwart Oommen Chandy, trouncing the CPI(M)'s Jaick C Thomas by a record margin of 37,719 votes. P12

No fresh probe into Sowjanya case: HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE Karnataka High Court on Friday dismissed the public interest litigation (PIL) filed by Girish Bharadwaj and three others seeking a court-monitored fresh investigation into the brutal rape and murder of Sowjanya in Dharmasthala.

Orally observing that the order of acquittal of the accused cannot be challenged by way of PIL, the court said that aggrieved parties –parents of the victim or the investigating agency – can file an appeal against the acquittal of the accused. Sowjanya, a minor, was raped and murdered on October 9, 2012, in Belthangady police limits in Dakshina Kannada. Initially, the case was investigated by the local police and later handed over to the CBI. Recently, the Special Court for CBI cases acquitted Santhosh Rao, the accused, and stated that the case be placed before the acquittal committee for taking action against errant officials.

The petitioners stated that the real culprits involved in this gruesome case still roam free and this has resulted in trauma and probable danger to more innocent lives. They also stated that the case has become a matter of public importance. Protests are being held across the state for a fresh probe. There is a need for the court's interference to safeguard the interests of the public at large.

MAJESTIC MARCH
Dasara elephants march as part of rehearsal for Jamboo Savari, ahead of Dasara festivities, in Mysuru on Friday | EXPRESS

EXPRESS READ

ASI gets more time for Gyanvapi survey

Varanasi: A Varanasi court on Friday issued an order granting four more weeks to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to complete the scientific survey of the Gyanvapi mosque complex and submit its report.

High Court reserves order on Prajwal's plea

Bengaluru: The Karnataka High Court on Friday reserved the order on JDS leader Prajwal Revanna's plea seeking stay on the September 1 order declaring his election as MP from Hassan null and void for indulging in corrupt practice | P4

NHAI IN DOCK

53 toll collecting agencies owe state ₹500 crore

S LALITHA @ Bengaluru

THE Stamps and Registration Department has taken up the issue of long-pending stamp duty to be paid by all private agencies manning the toll gates across the state.

The department has written to the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to share details regarding the contracts it had entered into with the agencies to man the toll gates so that the stamp duty due from them can be collected.

A contractor has to pay 1% of the contract sum (amount quoted to obtain the contract) entered into with NHAI towards stamp duty. This is in line with the Karnataka Stamp Act 1957 under Article 32 (A) (i). However, it appears that no strict enforcement of it has been made so far.

Sources said, "If all the 53 contractors manning the toll gates pay the stamp duty on the contracted sum in the licence/agreement obtained for operations, the department would earn a revenue of approximately Rs 500 crore."

In her letters to toll gate operating firms as well as NHAI, BR Mamatha, Inspector-General of Stamps and Registration, Karnataka, directed them to pay the stamp duty.

The department's offices in districts across the state have been asked to initiate steps to collect the stamp duty from such firms.

A few toll collecting agencies have paid meagre sums towards stamp duty. "However, a detailed study of their contractual agreements reveals they have only paid a pittance compared to what they actually need to pay," a source said.

"They are also being asked to pay the deficit stamp duty sum," the source added.

Apart from explaining details regarding the stamp duty to be paid, the department has also warned the firms of legal action in case of non-compliance.

MUMBAI FIRM TOLD TO PAY ₹5.83 LAKH

Citing an instance of the gross underpayments made by toll gate operators towards Stamp Duty, a source said a contractor had just paid ₹100 as Stamp Duty instead of paying ₹5,83,200 on the agreement entered into with NHAI. The Deputy Commissioner of Stamps and District Registrar, Belagavi, has issued the Mumbai-headquartered company a notice, ordering it to pay the remaining ₹5,83,100 within two weeks of receipt of the notice.

Christian Development Corporation soon: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday said that the state government will soon establish "Christian Development Corporation" for the welfare of the community members. He was speaking after participating in a function to mark the annual St Mary's Feast here.

Siddaramaiah said that he had announced the setting up of the corporation in the budget he presented a few months ago. "We will establish it soon. A sum of Rs 100 crore will be earmarked for it," he added.

The government will appoint a prominent member of the community as chairperson of the corporation, he said. Siddaramaiah said there is no space for hatredness in the name of caste and religion. But some people are trying to make hatredness as part of the country's culture. Stating that no religion preaches hatredness, he said some people are trying to divide society in the name of religion. "We will not allow any form of moral policing," he added. On the demand to name Shivajinagar Metro station after St Mary, he said that his government will consider it.